

LIBRARY

URBAN DISTRICT  
OF  
SOWERBY BRIDGE



MEDICAL OFFICER'S  
ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE  
Health and Sanitary State  
of the District  
FOR THE YEAR 1942

---

KERSHAW & ASHWORTH LTD., HEBDEN BRIDGE



URBAN DISTRICT  
OF  
SOWERBY BRIDGE



MEDICAL OFFICER'S  
ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE  
Health and Sanitary State  
of the District  
FOR THE YEAR 1942

---

KERSHAW & ASHWORTH LTD., HEBDEN BRIDGE



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2018 with funding from  
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30121309>

# Urban District of Sowerby Bridge

---

## MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE

December 31st, 1942

Councillor T. HAIGH, J.P.

(Chairman of the Council)

- „ A. SUTCLIFFE  
(Vice-Chairman of the Council)
- „ S. NICHOLL  
(Chairman of the Health Committee)
- „ C. Arrand
- „ T. Broadbent, J.P.
- „ A. Butterworth
- „ E. Butterworth, C.C.
- „ W. Crossfield
- „ S. Dawson
- „ J. Graysan
- „ C. G. Hopkinson
- „ R. H. Howarth
- „ A. F. Longbottom
- „ E. Lumb, J.P.
- „ C. W. Maude, J.P.
- „ J. Noble
- „ G. Sharp
- „ G. W. Tucker, J.P.
- „ E. Wigglesworth,
- „ J. W. Wiley
- „ J. T. Mitchell, J.P.
- „ A. Murgatroyd
- „ H. Haigh
- „ G. Vine

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Chairman: Mr. Councillor S. NICHOLL

Medical Officer of Health: Dr. A. O. JOLLIE,  
L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S. (Edin.), L.R.F.P.&S. (Glas.)

Acting Medical Officer of Health:  
Dr. V. C. MEYER, M.B.Ch.B. (Glas.)

Senior Sanitary Inspector:  
WM. E. FOSTER, M.R.I.A., M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector:  
M. E. D. WILSON, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

---

---

## URBAN DISTRICT STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Area of the District in Acres ...	...	...	...	...	6,966
Rateable Value ...	...	...	...	...	£88,071
Product of a Penny Rate ...	...	...	...	...	£345
Birth Rate, 1942 ...	...	...	...	...	15.6
„ „ 1941 ...	...	...	...	...	13.3
„ „ 1940 ...	...	...	...	...	12.7
Death Rate, 1942 ...	...	...	...	...	14.0
„ „ 1941 ...	...	...	...	...	14.7
„ „ 1940 ...	...	...	...	...	16.4
Infantile Mortality ...	...	...	...	...	56
Maternal Mortality ...	...	...	...	...	3.3



# REPORT

of the

## Medical Officer of Health

For the Year ending December 31st, 1942

To the Chairman and Members of the Public Health  
Committee of the Urban District of Sowerby Bridge

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting to you my Annual Report as Medical Officer of Health, on the Health and Statistics of your District, together with the work done in the Health Department during the year ending 31st December, 1942. This war-time Report has again been curtailed in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health.

### VITAL STATISTICS

The following extracts of Births and Deaths are taken from the Returns furnished by the Registrar General, after correction for the Inward and Outward Transfers:—

		M.		F.		Total
Live Births	Legitimate .....	139	...	132	...	271
	Illegitimate .....	11	...	3	...	14
		150	...	135	...	285

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident popula-						
tion	...	...	...	...	...	15.6

		M.		F.		Total
Still Births	Legitimate .....	8	...	6	...	14
	Illegitimate .....	—	...	—	...	—
		8	...	6	...	14

Rate per 1,000 (of live and still births)	...	...	46.8
---	-----	-----	------

	M.	F.	Total
Deaths ... ..	128	128	256
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ... ..			14.0
Number of deaths of infants under 1 year of age ...			16
Infantile Mortality (all infants per 1,000 live births)			56
Maternal Mortality ... ..			3.3
Deaths from Puerperal Causes ... ..			Nil.
Deaths from Cancer ... ..			45
Deaths from Tuberculosis ... ..			7
Deaths from Measles ... ..			1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ...			1

### STATISTICAL COMPARISON OF OTHER SMALL TOWNS

1942	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Infant Mort. Rate
Towns in England & Wales...	18.4	12.1	46
Sowerby Bridge .....	15.6	14.0	56

### INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Age Period (Years)	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Enteric Fever	Puerperal Fever	Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Measles	Whooping Cough	Cerebral-Spinal Fever	Smallpox
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	3	—	—
1 — 5	16	5	—	—	1	—	189	33	—	—
5 — 15	18	5	—	—	2	—	79	12	—	—
15 — 25	4	3	—	1	3	—	4	1	—	—
25 — 35	2	3	—	—	1	—	2	—	1	—
35 — 45	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
45 — 55	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
55 — 65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Over 65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Total Cases Notified	35	16	—	1	9	—	286	49	2	—
Cases Admitted to Hospital	33	16	—	1	—	—	1	—	2	—
Total Deaths	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—



## TUBERCULOSIS

Total Cases on Register	PULMONARY				NON-PULMONARY		
	Males	Females	Total		Males	Females	Total
75	28	18	46	...	14	15	29

The usual enquiries have been made covering the notifiable diseases, all contacts being excluded from School and complete disinfection of the bedding, etc., being carried out in order to control as far as possible the spread of such diseases.

During the year it was found necessary to close the Tuel Lane Infants' School owing to an outbreak of mumps. Apart from this there has not been any prevalence of infectious disease during the year, the notifications comparing very favourably with those for districts similar in size to Sowerby Bridge.

The tables show a slight decrease in the number of cases of Scarlet Fever; Diphtheria continues to decrease, which is most encouraging.

### Diphtheria Immunisation

The campaign commenced during 1941 has continued through the year, with an increasing amount of success. This has now resulted in 79 per cent. of the school children and 40 per cent. of the children under 5 years of age receiving the full treatment, with many others waiting the completion of the treatment.

This work will continue during the New Year, and it is hoped that the campaign will result in a low diphtheria rate in the winter of 1943.

### General Provision of Health Services

Two Isolation Hospitals are available for the treatment of the notifiable infectious diseases, these being Northowram Hall, which serves Luddenden Foot and Midgley, and the Fielden Isolation Hospital, Todmorden, which covers the remaining portion of the Urban Area.

Guaranteed Hospital accommodation exists at these two Hospitals for the treatment of infectious patients.

During the year arrangements were made for the guaranteed hospital accommodation for Sowerby Bridge patients (excepting Luddenden Foot and Midgley) which means that guaranteed accommodation is now available for the entire district.

Other diseases, as pneumonia, etc., are treated at the Halifax General Hospital. Accommodation is also reserved for cases of smallpox at the Halifax Smallpox Hospital.

Child Welfare Centres are available at Sowerby Bridge and Luddenden Foot. These Centres serve the whole of the Sowerby Bridge Area, including Luddenden Foot and Midgley. Portions of the Luddenden Foot District of Halifax, together with parts of Mytholmroyd are also served. The centres continue their activities with much success.

Tuberculosis dispensaries are held twice weekly at the West Riding County Council's Dispensary in Sowerby Bridge.

Venereal Diseases are treated at the Halifax Royal Infirmary.

### **Scabies Order, 1941**

As a result of this Order every effort was made to arrange for the out-patient treatment of Scabies at the First Aid Post, Sowerby Bridge, the treatment to be undertaken by trained personnel. As these efforts were unsuccessful, a joint meeting of the Authorities in the West Calder Valley Area was convened in order to consider the advisability of setting up a cleansing station for the treatment of scabies in the districts concerned; again, owing to transport difficulties the scheme could not be put into operation. However, arrangements were finally completed for the out-patient treatment of scabies to be undertaken at the General Hospital, Halifax, in the Cleansing Station set aside for this purpose. In acute cases, where in-patient treatment is required, arrangements are made with the W.R.C.C. for treatment at an approved institution.

### **Ambulance Service**

According to the suggestions outlined in the Ministry of Health and F.B. Circular 79/41, the Civil Ambulance was



handed over to the West Riding County Council for operating and staffing with A.R.P. personnel for the duration of the present emergency. The work has, during the year, been carried out very efficiently, details of the journeys, etc., being as follows:—

Number of Journeys	In-District			...	Out-District		
	Removals	Accidents	Total		Removals	Accidents	Total
370	279	55	334		30	6	36

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

### Water Supply

The public supply for the district continues to give satisfaction, as samples from time to time have proved.

Samples for plumbo-solvency have been obtained from the Norland Supply and have proved satisfactory.

During the year the private water supplies in the more rural parts of the area have been sampled. Of the ten samples taken for bacteriological examination, only two proved to be unsatisfactory. The necessary action has been taken in each case.

The water supply to the Milner Royd Skin Hostel, Norland, has been completely overhauled. The supply has been traced back to the source and piped to suitable storage tanks of approximately 1,500 gallons capacity. The method of distribution has been entirely renewed with 1in. supply pipes. The water supply is now both suitable and sufficient.

### Drainage and Sewerage

There has been no extensions to the drainage and sewerage systems during the year.

Repairs were carried out on the drainage system and part of the sewer in Walker Lane. The drainage system for the most part was re-layed together with a short length of sewer.

Apart from this the usual small works and minor alterations have been carried out, these being subjected to the hydraulic test.

There has been no substantial change in the sanitary accommodation of the district. The more rural part still being served mainly by the earth closet or pail. Conversions have been delayed due to the present emergency and lack of an adequate water supply and sewerage system.

The outfall works at Milner Royd, which work on the Activated Sludge principle, continue to give satisfaction. There has not been any complaint from the Rivers Board during the year.

### Public Cleansing

The Cleansing Department continues its activities under great strain, due firstly to the shortage of man-power, and secondly due to the increased duties mainly in shelter cleansing and salvage collection.

The collection in the less congested parts has been placed on a fortnightly collection, whilst the remainder still receive weekly attention.

The pails are collected weekly, but owing to a vehicle being transferred to the Salvage Department the ashpits are not attended to quite so frequently.

The following table gives details of the number of receptacles cleansed by each vehicle during the year.

	Ashbins	Ashpits	Pails	Loads	Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.
S. & D. 5	109,871	1		613	2,060	15	—
S. & D. 1	30,071	23		1,143	1,326	5	—
Commer No. 3	22,177	551	11,737	911	1,216	—	—
Commer No. 4	4,543	106	25,105	771	968	—	—
Totals	166,662	681	36,842	3,438	5,571	20	—

### Salvage Department

The salvage of all materials continues at the controlled tips and Destructor Head, where all the refuse is sorted and a considerable amount of waste is reclaimed and returned to industry for the War Effort. Owing to the extension of the Department it has been necessary to operate one vehicle solely for the collection of salvage (mostly waste paper) from the factories and shops of the district. In order to

increase the yield each housewife has been provided with a sack, suitably marked, for the storage of salvage. The arrangement has proved very successful.

During the Yorkshire Salvage Competition the Council secured third prize of £100 for the monthly yield of waste paper. The amount collected being over 80 tons in one month, or more than 4 tons per 1000 of the population. The money was given to National and Local Charities.

The following details show the successful results obtained by the Department.

**Materials Reclaimed**

				T.	C.	Q.		£	s.	d.
Waste Paper	...	...	...	286	10	1	...	1618	15	7
Waste Food	...	...	...	3	13	2	...	5	10	2
Tins	...	...	...	61	7	2	...	51	4	10
Non-Ferrous Metals	...	...	...	1	11	1	...	33	1	5
Textiles	...	...	...	5	10	3	...	43	7	6
Bones	...	...	...	1	13	0	...	5	12	0
Cullet	...	...	...	15	2	1	...	7	11	2
Ferrous Metals	...	...	...	4	18	1	...	13	11	7
Bottles, 103 dozen	...	...	...					5	3	0
				<hr/>			...	<hr/>		
				380 6 3				£1783 17 3		
				<hr/>				<hr/>		

**General Inspection of the District**

Regular inspection of the district has taken place covering all complaints registered at the Department. Approximately 207 complaints were made, mainly dealing with nuisances under the Public Health Act. Many of these complaints were abated with the serving of an informal notice. There was no need for any Statutory Notices to be served during the year. At the close of the year 17 complaints under the Public Health Act remained outstanding.



## **HOUSING**

### **Housing Inspections**

Although no major works relative to housing were completed during the year, the usual routine inspection was carried out, and owing to the type of housing constant inspection has been required.

Under the Public Health Act 43 inspections were made, necessitating 63 visits. The necessary works were completed in 37 instances.

Under the Housing Act there were 43 inspections for general repairs, etc., necessitating 67 visits. The works were completed in all cases.

There are still many overcrowded houses in the district, and during the year 53 inspections of the houses were made, and every effort was made on the part of the Council to abate the overcrowding as far as possible, but owing to the acute housing position it has been impossible to effect much improvement. The position at the end of 1940 was that there were 36 overcrowded families, and during this time there were 13 cases of overcrowding which were abated, but in 1941 the 35 new cases appearing due to children attaining the age of 10 years, the overcrowding figures were increased to 61. In 1942 there was a slight improvement, the position now being that there are 57 cases of overcrowding at the end of the year.

### **Smoke Abatement**

With the restrictions imposed by the Ministry of Home Security relative to the production of smoke in the district, the Department has very reluctantly abandoned temporarily the observation of the factories in the area.

## **FOOD INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION**

### **Milk Production**

Regular visits and inspections have been made to all the farms in the district. The standard of cleanliness has generally been quite good, and the samples of milk obtained have shown that the milk generally has been of a good keeping quality.

At the present time we have 92 registered milk producers in the area, including 4 producing Accredited Milk.

Detailed inspections have been made and specifications prepared in connection with two farms. These have now been completed and brought up to the standard required for the production of Designated Milks. Every effort is being made to induce the milk producers of this district to improve the premises in order that they may comply with the standard required for either Accredited or Tuberculin Tested Milk.

I am pleased to say that many enquiries have come to hand, and it is hoped that in the very near future many more milk producers will be on either Accredited or Tuberculin Tested standards.

### **Food Inspection**

Regular inspection has been made at the 36 registered Food Preparing Establishments, and it has been found that no further alterations have been required, and the standard of cleanliness of the premises and utensils was found to be very satisfactory.

### **CENTRALISATION OF SLAUGHTER**

Centralised slaughter continues at the Public Abattoir, Sowerby Bridge, until October, 1942, when the slaughtering was transferred to Halifax. Up to October the following carcasses were inspected:—

## Meat Inspection

	Bovines	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
Number of Animals killed ...	496	13	2336	19
<b>All Disease except Tuberculosis:</b>				
Whole carcasses condemned ...	1	Nil.	2	Nil.
Carcasses of which some part was condemned ...	18	Nil.	13	1
Percentage of the number inspected ...	3.8	Nil.	.6	Nil.
<b>Tuberculosis</b>				
Whole carcasses condemned ...	3	1	Nil.	Nil.
Carcasses of which some part was condemned ...	32	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Percentage of the number inspected ...	7.5	7.7	Nil.	Nil.
Total number of inspections ...	...	...	...	140
Amount of Meat surrendered as unfit: 1 ton 7 cwts. 1 qr. 17 lbs.				
Amount of other food surrendered as unfit: 7 cwts. 1 qr. 9 lbs.				

## Civil Defence

The activities of the Department are still very materially centred around Civil Defence. The Services for which the Health Department is still responsible are:— Ambulance Service, Casualty Information Bureau, Decontamination Service, and the Emergency Mortuary Service. The personnel of the various Services are fully trained should any emergency arise.

The organisation of the Food Decontamination Service has now been completed in conjunction with the other Authorities, the training now having been completed.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I should like to record my appreciation of the keen interest shown by the Chairman, Mr. Councillor S. Nicholl, in all the work appertaining to the Health Department, and also to the Health Committee for their unfailing courtesy and valuable assistance rendered at all times.

My appreciation is also due to your Senior Sanitary Inspector, Mr. W. E. Foster, and to the technical and clerical staff of the Public Health Department, for their work during the year, and their assistance in preparing this Report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

VICTOR CAMPBELL MEYER,

Acting Medical Officer of Health.







